

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 712

To require a study and report regarding the designation of a new interstate route from Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mississippi.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 5, 2005

Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. LOTT, and Mr. COCHRAN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

A BILL

To require a study and report regarding the designation of a new interstate route from Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mississippi.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “14th Amendment
5 Interstate Highway Initiation”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) the 11-State region in the Southeast that
9 has been known historically as the “Southern Black

1 Belt” is, as of 2005, in need of the same regional
2 economic development plans as the plans modeled by
3 the Appalachian Regional Commission in 1965;

4 (2) the Southern Black Belt has an African-
5 American population that is twice the national aver-
6 age, because of historic population concentrations
7 dating to the pre-Emancipation period;

8 (3) Congress passed and the States ratified the
9 14th Amendment to the Constitution in 1868, guar-
10 anteeing equal rights to all persons in the United
11 States, including those formerly held in involuntary
12 servitude, largely with the protection and economic
13 advancement of the residents of that region in mind;

14 (4) despite the 14th Amendment, that region
15 and the residents of that region, particularly the de-
16 scendants of freed slaves, remain characterized by
17 low employment, low incomes, low education levels,
18 poor health, and high infant mortality;

19 (5) Congress recognizes the studies, findings,
20 and recommendations on the problems of the South-
21 ern Black Belt by the University of Georgia,
22 Tuskegee Institute, North Carolina State University,
23 and the University of Kentucky;

1 (6) disparity in transportation infrastructure
2 investment has been a key contributing factor to the
3 persistent poverty and social ills of that region;

4 (7) the lack of adequate east-west interstate
5 highway access has—

6 (A) provided a significant impediment to
7 travel throughout the region;

8 (B) served as a severe obstacle to the at-
9 traction of industry and jobs; and

10 (C) been a detriment to public health and
11 transportation safety;

12 (8) a new interstate highway designated
13 “United States Interstate 14” should be constructed
14 through the heart of the Southern Black Belt, link-
15 ing Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mississippi, and
16 following a route generally defined through Macon
17 and Columbus, Georgia, Montgomery, Alabama, and
18 Laurel and Natchez, Mississippi; and

19 (9) in light of the promise of economic parity
20 made by the United States to that region in the
21 14th Amendment, that new interstate highway
22 should be known as the “14th Amendment High-
23 way”.

1 **SEC. 3. STUDY AND REPORT.**

2 Not later than December 31, 2005, the Secretary of
3 Transportation shall complete a study and submit to the
4 appropriate committees of Congress a report that de-
5 scribes the steps and estimated funding necessary to con-
6 struct a new interstate route to be designated as “Inter-
7 state Route I–14” and known as the 14th Amendment
8 Highway, from Augusta, Georgia to Natchez, Mississippi
9 (formerly designated the Fall Line Freeway in the State
10 of Georgia).

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